



News from

# Congressman Ron Kind

REPRESENTING WISCONSIN'S THIRD  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

1406 Longworth House Office Building • Washington, D.C. 20515 • (202) 225-5506

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Contact: Stephanie Lundberg  
Phone: 202-225-5506

## Kind Calls for Investigation of Bush Administration's Questionable Spy Tactics on U.S. Citizens

*Temporary Extension of PATRIOT Act Needed While Debate Continues*

**Washington, DC** – U.S. Rep. Ron Kind (D-WI) today called for an immediate Congressional investigation in the reports that President Bush secretly authorized unlawful domestic spying on U.S. citizens. The New York Times reported on December 16, 2005, that President Bush secretly signed an executive order in 2002 to allow the National Security Agency (NSA) to conduct secret surveillance within the United States on American citizens and others without first obtaining a court order or presenting evidence to justify the surveillance.

“The notion that the President gave the NSA license to spy on Americans without obtaining a court warrant as is required under law is a very serious matter,” stated Rep. Kind. “This kind of unchecked and unfettered exercise of executive power is unlawful and dangerous, and we need to investigate this matter immediately.”

Kind said the executive-ordered spying may be in violation of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) of 1978, which requires warrants for the kind of espionage carried out under the special NSA program. Enacted a few years after the Watergate scandal, the FISA is aimed at protecting against excessive government intrusion on personal liberties. Key to the FISA, are provisions to ensure checks on the activities of the Executive Branch in the area of secret surveillance.

“There is no question that we must do things differently to protect ourselves in a post-Sept. 11 world, including how we gather intelligence and investigate potential threats to our national security,” said Rep. Kind. “But to take such action without congressional oversight or judicial review is a violation of our system of checks and balances- a system that is crucial to ensuring the safety and freedom of the American people.”

Kind also called for a temporary extension of the soon-to-expire PATRIOT Act while Congress debates whether the bill's provisions, most of which would be made permanent, are overreaching in authorizing powers to conduct secret searches. Kind voted against the reauthorization of the PATRIOT Act last week in the House, citing concerns with overly-broad search provisions as well as the lack of future Congressional oversight. Efforts to approve the bill in the Senate collapsed on the day the New York Times exposed the NSA domestic spying program, with several Senators pointing to the article as an example of why congressional and judicial curbs are needed on executive powers.

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“Clearly, there is a very intense debate still going on about how to best empower the government with the tools it needs to combat terrorism while protecting the rights and freedoms of U.S. citizens. In the interim, Congress should rise above the politics and pass a temporary extension of the PATRIOT Act.”